

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

July 18, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI
FROM: JESSICA TUCHMAN *JS*
SUBJECT: Monthly Report on Human Rights

Attached is the first of the monthly unclassified summaries of human rights developments -- prepared at your request.

It is a good job, but contains some sentences that might cause embarrassment if they appeared in the press as representing the Administration's position. For example, referring to Czechoslovakia's new emigre policy: "It probably was designed to earn Czechoslovakia some points for CSCE implementation, and to help it counter adverse publicity regarding its treatment of the Charter 77 dissidents."

Therefore, we should give some serious thought to how we want to use this document. If it is to have real value for internal use, the analysis is very useful. If we want to use it primarily as a handout for Congress and the press, then we probably should ask that future editions contain only facts, and no analysis.

There are some other questions to be answered before we start distribution?

-- Who prepared it?

-- Why is the Administration providing this document?

The second question is important. We may be feeding and encouraging the very tendency to keep a scorecard on human rights progress, particularly in this very short (monthly) time frame, which is just the opposite of what we want to do. We have been saying that real progress takes time, and that meaningful change only occurs over a period of years, and this paper implies something quite different. It could be argued that the Administration is playing both sides of the street in asking for several years before a real accounting of what the policy has achieved, while at the same time trying to claim credit for short term -- and essentially cosmetic -- changes.

cc: Jerry Schecter

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WORLDWIDE DEVELOPMENTS RELATED TO THE
US STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS

JUNE 1977

SOVIET UNION

There was a degree of apparently deliberate ambiguity in the Soviets' handling of internal dissent during June, while Moscow's public statements on the human rights issue reflected an increasingly tough line toward the US stand in general and President Carter in particular.

Prominent Jewish refusenik and human rights activist Anatoly Shcharansky, under detention since 15 March, reportedly was charged with treason early in the month. This charge carries a penalty of 10 to 15 years in a labor camp, or, in "extreme circumstances," death. By the end of the month, however, it was still not certain that Shcharansky actually had been formally charged with the offense, although the investigation of his case was in fact being conducted in connection with Article 64 (Treason) of the Russian Republic Criminal Code.

Soviet orchestration of the Shcharansky case included public allegations that the dissident community had joined US diplomats and newsmen in undertaking espionage activity at the CIA's behest. This theme was underscored by the temporary detention and interrogation of Los Angeles Times correspondent Robert Toth, who was queried extensively about his dissident contacts, and especially about his relationship with Shcharansky. By the end of June the Soviets had clearly developed an option for holding a trial of Shcharansky that would implicate a wide range of domestic and foreign targets--dissidents, US diplomats, and foreign newsmen.

Shcharansky had been one of the most active members of the dissident's CSCE monitoring group, a focus of official repression in recent months. In late June, two members of the group's Ukrainian chapter went on trial on the relatively harsh but commonly used charge of anti-Soviet agitation. In Moscow, however, Yury Orlov--the founder of the group--was reported to be facing charges of anti-Soviet slander, a considerably less serious offense. Also during June, two lesser Soviet dissidents,

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people to see to it that aid is not used to support "indefensible" governments. In parliamentary debate in mid-June, meanwhile, UK Minister of Overseas Development Judith Hart commented on the difficult moral and political questions involved in deciding whether to grant development aid to countries whose governments violate human rights.

The British Conservative Party issued a pamphlet on "Coping With the Soviet Union" that strongly endorsed pursuit of human rights objectives. The authors of the unofficial statement of Tory policy argued that the West should do "all it can" to support dissidents in the USSR and East Europe. The opposition Tories have taken a consistently harder line toward the Soviets than have the Labor governments of Wilson and Callahan. Since becoming party leader, Margaret Thatcher has been referred to as the "Iron Maiden" in Soviet media. The title alludes to her blunt criticism of Soviet military spending and her support of critics of the USSR elsewhere in Western Europe.

British attorney John MacDonald, unable to get a Soviet visa to defend Yuri Orlov in Moscow, conducted a public defense in London on June 13. Witnesses included Soviet exiles Bukovsky and Amalrik. The proceedings were timed for maximum impact on the eve of the Belgrade CSCE conference. MacDonald apparently believes Soviet law requires a court to accept all relevant written material, and he said that he would send a transcript of the testimony to the public prosecutor handling Orlov's case.

Norwegian Foreign Minister Frydenlund led an almost unanimous chorus of praise for recent trends in US foreign policy during a foreign policy debate in the parliament on June 6. Frydenlund declared that President Carter's Notre Dame speech required Norway's attention and support, especially in its emphasis on human rights. Norway's view, he said, has long been that support for authoritarian anti-communist regimes undermined rather than promoted the interests of the West.

LATIN AMERICA

Human rights matters dominated nearly every phase of the OAS General Assembly in Grenada, and there were some significant human rights-related developments in individual Latin countries as well.

Venezuela, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Panama, and Costa Rica helped the US secure passage of a strong human rights resolution at Grenada. Other countries voting in favor included Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Grenada, and Surinam. Argentina's effort to gain formal acceptance for the proposition that human rights must be considered in the context of a government's obligation to combat terrorism and maintain public order was defeated. Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Guatemala, and El Salvador supported the Argentine resolution.

Argentina and Chile wanted to see more attention focused on the underlying socio-political dynamics that have in their view made some governmental violations of human rights inevitable. The debates on human rights were emotional, and positions seemed to harden as the Assembly progressed. Chile's foreign minister, for example, denounced the US for allegedly promoting human rights in a divisive and discriminatory fashion.

Chile released Communist former senator Jorge Montes on 18 June. He was handed over to East German officials in exchange for eleven GDR political prisoners. After Chilean Communist Party chief Louis Corvalan was exchanged for Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky last December, Chile offered to let Montes go if Cuba would release Huber Matos in return. Havana never responded to this proposal. Montes was the only prominent figure from the Allende years still held in Chile. He was also the last detainee either acknowledged or known to be held without charge under state of siege provisions.

On 28 June Chile declined further US FY 1977 economic aid. It was not clear whether the move was in direct response to the State Department's announcement the same day that two agricultural loans for Chile included in the FY 1977 A.I.D. appropriation would be deferred for up to sixty days pending developments in the Chilean human rights situation. But the move did reflect Chile's negative reaction to US pressure on human rights in general. Last fall, Chile renounced US economic aid after FY 1977 in reaction to a cut-off by Congress of US military assistance.

Argentine officials announced a number of steps designed to improve that country's human rights image. The measures included some prisoner releases, the expediting of trials, and the banning of two issues of a

far right, racist magazine. While they were more cosmetic than substantive, the moves did seem to suggest increasing sensitivity on the part of the government to the potential implications of the US stand on human rights, particularly in regard to US voting in international financial institutions.

In an interview broadcast on June 9, Cuban President Fidel Castro told ABC's Barbara Walters that his regime holds some 2,000 - 3,000 political prisoners. The actual figure undoubtedly is much higher than this, but there is no solid information on the precise number of detainees. Castro has steadily revised his figure downward in public statements since 1967, when he said there were 20,000 political prisoners in Cuba.

In Panama, General Torrijos announced that some political prisoners would be allowed to return. He made it clear, however, that exiles had argued against Panama's position on the canal issue remained welcome because they "smell of treason."

Guatemala's President Laugerud denounced the US stand on human rights as a sophisticated form of colonialism, and declared that the US has imperialist ulterior motives. Laugerud seems to resent the fact that the US maneuvered him into rejecting US military assistance earlier this year.

Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez strongly endorsed the US stand on human rights during his visit to Washington. Perez remained the most outspoken among Latin leaders who have expressed support for the US stand.

ASIA

The most notable human rights developments in Asia during June took place in the Philippines and South Korea.

In a major speech to Manila-based foreign correspondents on 3 June, Philippine President Marcos staunchly defended his government's human rights record. Marcos admitted that there had been official complicity in the maltreatment of Ms. Trinidad Herrera, the well-known social

